(c) and (d) The Canteen Stores Department (CSD) does not have a system of classifying such product as a product of 'National repute'. The introduction of any product in CSD is based on a common assessment procedure with reference to market survey, pricing etc. and its continuance in CSD depends mainly upon its demand from the clients of CSD and is irrespective of the reputation or size of the suppliers|manufacturers.

Russian Capability to supply spares of IAF

421. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Russia has put new conditionalities regarding supply of spares for the IAF, and insisted on payment for such spares in hard currency;

(b) whether such a conditions has added a new dimension to the problems faced by the IAF in procuring adequate spares and overhauls for the aircrafts supplied by Russia;

(c) whether India has re-assessed the Russian capabilities of honouring delivery schedules for spares in view of the unsettled conditions there; and

(d) whether Government would consider the offers of Elbit and Israeli Aircraft Companies (both from Israel) on the IAF's MIG update package to revitalise the India's ageing MIG fleet ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) and (b) No. Sir. The payment to Russian supplying agencies for spares is made in Clearing U. S. Dollars, through their ESCROW accounts in Indian Banks.

(c) Re-assessment of capabilities of all suppliers, including Russians, is an on-going process.

(d) Techno-economic aspects will be the basis for considering the offers for MiG-21 BIS update from various agencies.

Israeli offer of Defence knowhow

422. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Times of India of 4-4-1993 under the caption Israel ready to offer defence knowhow; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) and (b) The establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel has opened up opportunities for bilateral co-operation in all fields including defence. Discussions on offers of interest to our Armed Forces have commenced. However, no contracts have been signed so far.

Special recruitment drive for the post of LDCs. in army

423. SHRI P. UPENDRA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a special recruitment drive has been undertaken in army in 1990 for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates for the post of LDCs;

(b) whether persons put on the panels have been given the appointment letters; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir. A special recruitment drive was undertaken in Army in 1990 for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates for various categories of posts, including LDCs.

(b) No, Sir.